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DISPATCH NO. ML-2864

CLASSIFICATION

TO : Chief, Foreign Division M

DATE: 3 August 1950

FROM : Chief of Station, Karlsruhe *4/1/50*

SUBJECT: GENERAL— Operational - OFFSPRING

SPECIFIC— Remilitarization

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1. Mr. HORN reported to me today in detail about a meeting he had had on 31 July 1950 with SPEIDEL and FOERTSCH at SPEIDEL's home in Weibingen. SPEIDEL had been requested by WILDERMUTH to draw up a memorandum on the general subject of remilitarization, with particular attention to the political and military prerequisites and to the psychological and ideological bases for making remilitarization palatable to the German people. SCHWERIN was not present at this meeting, and neither SPEIDEL, HORN, nor FOERTSCH were present at SCHWERIN's meeting in the Odenwald, about which more later.

2. SPEIDEL, HORN, and FOERTSCH agreed that the primary considerations preparatory to a beginning of German remilitarization are the following:

- a. In what way and to what degree the Western Powers (read USA) are prepared to guarantee German security during the transition period.
- b. To what extent the German can be assured of not being used as cannon fodder. (This involves the question of the proper arming and equipment of German units.)
- c. What will be done by the Western Powers with regard to ameliorating the situation of the German officers convicted at Nuernberg. (The Germans are aware that a mass pardoning is out of the question and would have harmful results. What they have in mind is the release of certain officers who are serving short-term sentences, plus the reduction of long-term sentences, plus an improvement in living conditions at Landsberg and Werl. The Germans are watching very closely the activities of the parole board presently investigating the situation in Landsberg.)

A satisfactory solution of these three questions is considered by SPEIDEL, HORN, and FOERTSCH to be the essential prerequisite for any concrete measures towards remilitarization.

3. Of secondary importance are the following domestic political considerations:

- a. A gradual reorientation of the German press (including the Allied press in Germany).
- b. Solution of the problem arising from that article in the German Constitution which forbids punishment of those who refuse to serve in the armed forces; and
- c. Active support and participation of the opposition. (This refers primarily to the SPD and the unions. According to HORN, SCHUMACHER's attitude thus far has been that he could not approve or support any measures looking to remilitarization but that he would at least hold his tongue. HORN states flatly that this is not sufficient, that the opposition must actively and whole-heartedly participate.)

4. SPEIDEL is framing a memorandum to WILDERMUTH embracing the foregoing deliberations, which he will present to WILDERMUTH, who, in turn, will pass it on to the Chancellor, probably soon after the Chancellor's return from his vacation or or about 10 August. The plan is that the Chancellor, after examination of the report, will take the matter up with the High Commissioners. Assuming that the latter approve, the Federal Government will then establish a small staff to make contact with the Allied military authorities. In this connection, HORN emphasizes the fact that it is nonsense for the Germans to make specific plans for the size and nature of their future armed forces without first ascertaining from the Allies (read USA) what the latter are in a position to supply in the way of arms and equipment and over what period of time such deliveries can be anticipated. Only with such knowledge, says HORN, can the Germans even begin to start specific planning.

5. I asked HORN for clarification of the relationship between WILDERMUTH and SCHWERIN. HORN replied that he was as much in the dark about this as we were and that he could only assume that the Chancellor may be up to his old practice of delegating a specific task or responsibility to two or three different persons or agencies, playing one off against the other, culling the results and keeping the power in his own hands. He pointed out, however, that one explanation might be a division of responsibility in terms of passive and active defense. He says that he has received the impression that SCHWERIN was to be primarily concerned with problems of civilian defense - air raid protection, prevention of unorganized flight by refugees, strengthening of the police, organization of border guards, etc. He does not know this to be true but said that if such a division were intended, with SCHWERIN taking responsibility for passive defense and WILDERMUTH taking responsibility for active defense, it would be a possible arrangement, provided that the necessary coordination could be achieved.

6. HORN reported in some detail on a conversation which took place two weeks ago between SPEIDEL and PONCET. PONCET had become very excited during this interview when the question of remilitarization and the defense of Germany had been raised. He said that in case of war, he anticipated that there would be a tremendous flood of refugees to the West and that France could not possibly accept them. He said that refugees would be checked at the border and only men capable of military service would be allowed to come through. They would then be incorporated into French battalions and committed under French officers. It is possibly superfluous to add that in HORN's opinion and in the opinion of all responsible Germans, such a disposition of German forces is absolutely out of the question. The Germans feel very strongly on this point, which is why it was raised under point (b) of the essential considerations listed above. The Germans are determined that if they are permitted and expected to participate in the defense of Germany, they must be given adequate means to do so in exclusively German units under German officers, under circumstances which give them at least a fighting chance. The idea of being dissipated in the units of other forces is intolerable.

7. HORN urgently emphasized the importance of not putting this information into channels where it might get back to the Chancellor prior to his receiving the memorandum and presenting it to the Allied High Commissioners. He feels that he and his colleagues would be seriously compromised if the Chancellor knew that the Americans had previous knowledge of the project. If, however, the Chancellor fails, in two or three weeks following his return, to take the matter up with the High Commissioners, then HORN feels that one or all of the High Commissioners should take the initiative and take it up with the Chancellor.

8. Comment: In the speculation as to the respective roles of WILDERMUTH and SCHWERIN, the OFFSPRING leaders are inclined to give considerable credence to the assumption that SCHWERIN is strongly backed by the British. SCHWERIN's British connections are, of course, well known to them, and the fact that BLANKENHORN appears to be so closely allied to SCHWERIN strengthens them in their suspicions. Since dictating the above, I asked UTILITY about SCHWERIN's proposed trip to Munich. He said that it had not taken place and that the reason why it had not taken place was that UTILITY had turned SCHWERIN down. He said frankly that he did not want to give SCHWERIN the impression of being too anxious to see him. There is little doubt that a meeting will take place sometime in the more or less immediate future, but it will be at a time and under circumstances which UTILITY considers favorable.